

Behaviour Policy

Assumption Senior Girls National School



School Address: Walkinstown, Dublin 12

Roll number: 18170B

School Patron: Archdiocese of Dublin

1. INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

This policy is a collaboration between Principal, teachers, parents, and Board of Management of Assumption Senior Girls school. It was formulated in the light of “Developing a Code of Behaviour – Guidelines for Schools”.

2. RATIONALE

The children in Assumption Senior Girls School are, by and large, very well behaved. They have a positive attitude to school and learning and show respect to others.

However:

- It is necessary for the children to understand that their behaviour can have consequences for themselves and others. Good behaviour has a positive effect on others while bad behaviour can have a negative effect on others.

- All members of the school community will be aware of the standards expected in our school.

- The formulation of a Code of Behaviour is a requirement under the Education Welfare Act 2000 (Section 23) which refers to ‘the obligation on schools to prepare a code of behaviour in respect of the students registered at the school, specifying:
 - a) The standards of behaviour that shall be observed by each student attending the school
 - b) The measures that shall be taken when a student fails or refuses to observe those standards
 - c) The procedures to be followed before a student may be suspended or expelled from the school
 - d) The procedures to be followed in relation to a child’s absence from school.

3. RELATIONSHIP OF CODE TO CHARACTERISTIC ETHOS OF THE SCHOOL AIMS

A positive attitude permeates the code, which is based on respect, courtesy and self- discipline. It also recognises the differences between children and the need to accommodate these differences.

The school rules are put in place to create an atmosphere of harmony and security for the Children and to ensure the safety and well-being of all members of the school community.

We adopt a whole school approach to this code, where all teachers and staff are involved in maintaining our Code of Behaviour.

Our Code of Behaviour aims to achieve the efficient operation of our school and create a stimulating environment for the children in our care and ensure that the system of rules, rewards, and sanctions are implemented in a fair and consistent manner.

We also aim to assist parents and pupils in understanding the systems and procedures that form part of the Code of Behaviour and to seek their co-operation in the application of these procedures.

4. UNDERSTANDING BEHAVIOUR

The staff at Assumption Senior Girls School is also aware of the factors that affect behaviour. These factors include external and interpersonal factors (such as parent and family patterns and relationships, peer groups/friends and neighbourhood and community factors) and within-person factors (including age and stage of development, personality and temperament, physical and medical characteristics and ability to learn). The staff also believes that students' bad behaviour can change and will endeavour to assist pupils to modify their behaviour. Examples of support and intervention for pupils are outlined below.

5. GUIDELINES

A strong sense of community and co-operation is required from staff, pupils and parents to implement the code. There is recognition of the variety of differences that exist between children and the need to accommodate these differences

GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR BEHAVIOUR

Our aim is to create a happy, safe environment for all our pupils, within which there is a sense of good order and effective teaching and learning. In general, we expect all members of the school community to be:

- Kind
- Respectful of self, others and environment
- Generous of word and action

6. ATTENDANCE & PUNCTUALITY

- Each child is expected to attend school on a regular basis and to be punctual. School starts at **9.00 am**.
- Any pupils who are late are asked to sign the late book. If pupils are consistently late a phone call may be sent to parents requiring an explanation.
- The time they arrived may be recorded on the school's attendance system and may be referred to on school reports at the end of the year.
- When a child is absent, parents must send in an explanatory note or doctor's cert to the class teacher, or make a note in the school journal, giving reasons for the child's absence.
- A phone call to the secretary on the first day of absence is useful though not essential. This is not a substitute for a note or letter of absence.
- Our attendance system will send a text to all parents whose children have missed 10 days or more. If a child is absent for 20 days the school is obliged to inform TUSLA /NEWB.
- Parents are reminded at the start of each year that should their child miss in excess of 20 days; this will be reported to the TUSLA. As a courtesy, the parents are advised if their daughter has been reported.

7. STRATEGIES FOR PROMOTING POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR

- All staff shares our school ethos, which emphasises care, respect and responsibility.
- We have school gatherings where success is acknowledged, rewarded and celebrated.
- Staff encompass a welcoming attitude to parents and consult with them where necessary/beneficial and parents are also asked to display courtesy and respect.
- We acknowledge positive behaviour through the use of a note in the homework journal, by praising / commending children on their behaviour and by rewarding them. Rewards may include, stars, stickers, homework passes, and class rewards such as Golden Time

- Teachers ensure that the class timetable is as varied as possible and present a balanced educational programme for the pupils.
- Problems that are noticed are dealt with as soon as possible.
- Clear and simple classroom rules will be developed in discussion with the children. Each class will embrace a class code stated in terms of observable behaviours.
- Children will be made aware that misbehaviour and failure to adhere to school and class rules will incur clear, consistent consequences.
- SPHE (Social, Personal & Health Education) is used as a structure within which to address the teaching of social skills.

8. SCHOOL EXPECTATIONS FOR PUPILS

The following outline of procedures for the classroom, yard and school environment set a positive atmosphere in relation to pupil learning, behaviour and achievement.

General:

- Our school is a bully free zone. All reported incidents are investigated.
- We expect our children to come to school with a positive attitude towards their learning, with all necessary equipment which should be replaced if necessary. This will vary according to your child's class level but the children will be advised by the class teacher as to what they need in class and what sanctions will be imposed.
- We expect that all children will show respect for themselves, for others and for school books and property.
- Pupils may not leave the school grounds for any reason without permission
- Name calling or bad language is not allowed in the school.
- Pupils must not damage school property.
- Pupils may not use mobile phones on school premises or on school outings or trips. Phones must be switched off as soon as they enter the school grounds. – see mobile phone policy.

Mornings:

- Pupils should be in their class line by 9am.
- Pupils should wear the school uniform each day. This consists of a red V-neck jumper, a white blouse, navy skirt, pinafore or trousers. On PE days only, the school red and navy-blue tracksuit should be worn with a red or white polo shirt. All parts of uniform should be clearly marked with child's name. Parents are notified if children are wearing the incorrect uniform. Children not wearing the correct uniform will be provided with one for the day. A formal letter will be sent home in the event of a child consistently not wearing the correct uniform. Hair should be tied back and no make-up or nail- varnish or false nails are allowed. The only jewellery permitted is: one pair of stud earrings and/or a watch which should not be worn for PE or after school sport.

Break Times

- Our school is a bully free zone. The children are encouraged to tell the teacher or staff in the yard if there is an incident as taught in the stay safe programme
- Healthy lunches are promoted within the school. Lunches are eaten in classrooms and children are asked not to bring food or drink into the yard. Chewing gum is never allowed. (See Healthy Eating Policy for further information).
- Children must remain seated during indoor break times.
- Children are expected to line up quietly when the bell goes at the end of each yard break.
- Assumption Senior Girls school is a Green School. The children are expected to keep their classrooms clean and tidy. Uneaten food and packaging should be taken home.
- Pupils must not damage school property.
- When children are playing on the yard excessive physical contact such as pushing, pulling, slide tackling, kicking) is not allowed. Activities such as piggybacking and gymnastics are forbidden for safety reasons.

- Books or toys or sharp objects not be brought to the yard.

Toilets

- Pupils should treat all toilet facilities in the school with respect and must not damage them in any way.
- Pupils must not waste toilet paper or toilet soap.
- Pupils are encouraged to wash and dry their hands after going to the toilet.

In Class

- Each girl is expected to have all text books and equipment necessary for her particular class
- Tippex is not allowed for safety reasons.
- Each girl must do her homework in a neat and tidy manner and must bring in a note from parents to her teacher if homework is not done. Pupils may be required to complete homework on the corridor at break time.
- The girls must treat all staff members and visitors with respect.
- All classes will participate in the development of their class rules and agree to keep them.
- No child should upset the smooth running of the class.
- Children should sit correctly in their chairs.

School activities outside of the school

- The standards expected in the Code of Behaviour apply in any situation where pupils are still the responsibility of the school. These include school trips, library visits, going to and from the church, fieldtrips and games after school etc
- When walking outside the school, all children must cross the road only at the direction of the teacher/adult who is with them.

- Breaking school rules on school trips may lead to exclusion from further outings.

Going Home:

- Pupils must leave the school in an orderly fashion down the back stairs and through the yard.
- Children leaving school early should be collected from the secretary's office by a parent or guardian and must be "signed out". If the child is returned to school, or arrives after the roll call (9.50am), she must be signed in. Children who have early dental or doctor's appointments should advise the teacher the day before.

Substance Use (See Substance Use Policy)

Children must not bring illegal drugs, cigarettes or alcohol to school.

9. STRATEGIES FOR DEALING WITH UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR

The degree of misbehaviour (i.e. minor, serious or gross) is decided by the teachers on the basis of their professional judgement and based on a common sense approach with regard to the gravity/frequency of the misbehaviour and the age and understanding of the child.

EXAMPLES OF MINOR MISBEHAVIOURs

- Interrupting class work (e.g. walking around the classroom without permission; throwing objects; talking at the wrong time; making noise; fiddling; eating at the wrong time)
- Running in school building
- Placing unfinished food/drink cartons in class bin
- Leaving litter around school
- Being discourteous/unmannerly

- Not completing homework without good reason
- Not responding to the school bell in a timely manner.
- Disruptive behaviour during school/class activities
- Lack of compliance with school policy on hair, make up and jewellery
- Not wearing the correct uniform

The above list is not exhaustive.

PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH MINOR MISBEHAVIOUR

Strategies used to show disapproval of minor incidents of unacceptable behaviour:

- Reasoning with the pupil
- Reprimand (including advice on how to improve)
- Child moved to somewhere else in the classroom or required to work away from others (Time Out)
- Child will be kept inside during playtime
- Child removed to work in another classroom.
- Parents/guardians may be informed.
- Loss of Privileges
- Repeated behaviour may be noted in the pupil's annual report
- Parents may be requested to meet class teacher
- Referral to Principal

Writing down of accounts:

In some circumstances, pupils may be asked to write down an account of an incident in order to allow for clarity so the school can work towards resolving the

issue effectively.

10. EXAMPLES OF SERIOUS MISDEMEANOURS

- Repeated and persistent minor misbehaviours
- Being constantly disruptive in class.
- Repeated refusal to do homework – this does not apply to children who genuinely try to do their homework but are unable to complete it.
- Persistent less serious misbehaviour despite all reasonable interventions, both rewards and sanctions.
- Repeated telling of lies
- Stealing – intentional taking of items.
- Endangering self/fellow pupils.
- Wilful damage to school/other pupil's property.
- Back answering /negative attitude to any member of the school community.
- Leaving school premises during school day without appropriate permission.
- Using unacceptable language.
- Rude/inappropriate comments about others.
- Use of mobile phone
- Verbal abuse or racist remarks
- Deliberately injuring another person
- Bullying and Cyber Bullying. (See separate Policy Document)
- Making threats of physical violence to another person.

This list is not exhaustive.

11. STRATEGIES FOR DEALING WITH SERIOUS MISBEHAVIOUR IN CLASS

1. Teacher will reprimand / speak to the pupil
 2. The pupil will be sent to the Principal's office for a period of time to enable the pupil to amend the behaviour.
 3. On occasion it may be necessary, for the safety of all children, to remove the other children from their classroom. The misbehaving child will remain in the room under the supervision of an adult until she has calmed down.
 4. Letter of apology from pupil co-signed by parent.
 5. Meeting between parents and class teacher/ principal / Chairperson of Board of management
 6. The pupil may be kept in detention at all/some breaks for a specified period until the school feels that the behaviour has ceased or will not re-occur.
 7. In the event of an incident of serious misbehaviour or where a pupil is continuously disruptive, she may be suspended by the Board of Management for a minor fixed period (1-3 school days).
- Utilising a Behaviour Plan may be considered, when a child consistently exhibits challenging and disruptive behaviour. A Behaviour Plan will focus on one behaviour at a time and the achievement of the targets will be reinforced positively. It is envisaged that the child will be involved in the setting of targets. In the event that a child is entitled to a support teacher on the basis of her behavioural needs, the support teacher and staff may set targets in consultation with the child, the class teacher and the parents.

12. RECORDING INCIDENTS OF MISBEHAVIOUR

Each teacher will record all incidents of serious misbehaviour by pupils. This information will be stored in the pupil's file. This record will be shared with parents when/if parents are called in to discuss their child's behaviour or on request of the

parent. This file is given to the principal in the event that there are regular incidents of misbehaviour.

13. INTERVENTIONS AND SUPPORT

At the start of each year, the teacher (following discussion with the children) will agree what will be expected of everyone with regard to school and class rules.

As part of the SPHE programme in school, a Social skills programme is taught. This will highlight the need for respect for self, others and the environment.

For pupils who exhibit particularly challenging behaviour, support services may be requested to assist in responding to the needs of the pupils. Sources of support may include, the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS), HSE Community Psychology Services and the National Council for Special Education. This will happen in consultation with the Principal and the parents/guardians.

STRATEGIES TO DEAL WITH CONTINUOUSLY DISRUPTIVE PUPILS and/or SERIOUS INCIDENTS OF MISBEHAVIOUR ARE AS FOLLOWS –

The staff in Assumption Senior Girls School will intervene early and positively when student behaviour does not meet the standards of behaviour expected in the school. Records of serious incidents and/or continuous minor misbehaviour will be kept. Early involvement of parents is considered essential.

- The pupil will be warned officially to stop offending.
- The parents/guardians will be informed.
- Loss of Privileges including school outings and trips
- The parents will be invited to meet either the class teacher and/or the Principal to discuss serious incidents of misbehaviour. The record of reported incidents will be brought to the meeting.

- In the event of a serious incident of misbehaviour or where a pupil is continuously disruptive the Board of Management may suspend her for a minor fixed period (one to three school days).
- A programme of intervention as suggested in the NEPS publication Behavioral, Emotional and Social Difficulties – A Continuum of Support may also be formulated to enable the child manage and change her behaviour. This programme will be reviewed to evaluate the impact and effectiveness of the intervention.
- Throughout, every effort will be made to keep the relationship with the student as positive as possible.

14. GROSS MISBEHAVIOUR

Examples include:

- Wilful damage to property;
- Deliberately setting out to do damage e.g. leaving taps/fire extinguisher turned on, aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a teacher/any staff member/pupil/parent /visitor and so forth;
- Setting fire to school property;
- Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards any member of the school community
- Any act of assault against pupils, staff member, visitor, parent and so forth.

This list is not exhaustive.

In the event of gross misbehaviour by a pupil the Principal/Chairperson/Board will be notified. The Principal/Board will examine the issues. The Principal/Board may consider sanctions including immediate suspension pending discussion with the parents/guardians (see below).

15. Additional areas of relevance to Assumption SGNS

- **Nails:** Pupils are not permitted to wear fake nails or nail polish into school or during school activities as they can be a distraction to the pupil's education. Furthermore, fake nails of any kind can offer a risk to the health and safety of the pupils. If a pupil wears fake nails into school, they will not be allowed to participate in any activities which the teacher feels may be of risk to the health and safety of the pupil or her peers.
- **Electronic watches:** Pupils are not permitted to wear any electrical devices of any kind (E.G. Apple watch, fitbit etc.) unless in the case of a medical need (E.G Diabetes monitoring). Such devices may offer a privacy concern as well as a distraction for pupils during lessons.
- **Watches/Rings/Jewellery:** Pupils are only permitted to wear small stud earrings. If a pupil wears non-studded earrings then that pupil may not be allowed to participate in any activities which the school deems as a risk to her health and safety.
- **Skipping ropes:** Pupils are not permitted to have skipping ropes in the school yard as they offer a risk to the children's health and safety.

16. PROCEDURES FOR SUSPENSION

It is important to note that in the event of any child being suspended, this suspension will be notified to the NEWB and may be part of the child's record.

The Board of Management and Staff of Assumption Senior Girls school will follow the procedures for suspension and expulsion outlined in the Guidelines for Schools on Developing a Code of Behaviour (Chapters 10 – 12).

http://www.newb.ie/codes_of_behaviour_guidelines/download_guidelines.asp

Fair procedures (i.e. the right to be heard and the right to impartiality) will be applied at all times. Accordingly, pupils and their parents will be fully informed about an allegation and the processes that will be used to investigate and decide the matter and they will be given an opportunity to respond to an allegation before a decision is made and before a serious sanction is imposed. In exceptional circumstances, the Principal/Board may consider an immediate suspension to be necessary when the continued presence of the pupil in the school at the time would

represent a serious threat to the safety of pupils or staff of the school, or any other person (p73).

The Board of Management will also follow the factors to consider before suspending a student (p.72) and the factors to consider before proposing to expel a student (p82).

In relation to suspension:

- Communication to parents regarding the suspension of a pupil or the possibility of suspension will be in writing and copies of all correspondence will be retained. In some circumstances it may be necessary to contact parents by phone.
- The parents/guardians and the pupil will be invited to meet with the Principal and/or Members of the Board of Management to discuss the proposed suspension.
- The Board of Management has delegated responsibility for suspension to the principal in the event that immediate suspension of a pupil is warranted (Guidelines p73). The parents/guardians and child will be invited to discuss the matter with the Principal and the procedures governing suspension will be applied.
- A written statement of the terms and date of the termination of a suspension will be given to parents/guardians
- A period of suspension will not be for more than three days, except in exceptional circumstances where the principal considers that a period of suspension longer than three days is necessary in order to achieve a particular objective. The letter will confirm;
- the period of the suspension and the dates on which the suspension will begin and end
- the reasons for the suspension
- any programme of study to be followed
- the arrangements for returning to school, including any commitments to be entered into by the student and the parents (for example, the pupil and parents might be asked to reaffirm their commitment to the code of behaviour)

- the provision for an appeal to the Board of Management
- the right to appeal to the Secretary general of the Department of Education and Science

(Education Act 1998 Section 29).

- The suspension will be recorded on the TUSLA / NEWB 'Student Absence Report Form'
- When a period of suspension ends, the pupil will be re-admitted formally to the class by the principal.
- Where a satisfactory resolution of a problem is achieved, a pupil may be re-admitted to school within a suspension period at the discretion of the Principal and/or the chairperson of the Board of Management.
- If a pupil continues to misbehave, she may be suspended for a major fixed period (up to ten days) to allow for consultation with both the pupil and the pupil's parents/guardians to address the issues.
- As outlined above, parents/guardians and pupil will be given the opportunity to discuss the issues with the Principal/Board of Management.
- The Education Welfare Officer will be informed when a student has been suspended for six days or more cumulatively.
- Section 29 Appeal – when the total number of days for which the student has been suspended in the current school year reaches 20 days the parents may appeal the suspension under section 29 of the Education Act and will be given information about how to appeal.

It should be noted that teachers, the Principal and the Board of Management do not wish to have to suspend any pupils and will only do so when every other possible avenue of action has been exhausted.

17. PROCEDURES FOR EXPULSION – The procedures outlined on pages 83 – 86 of the TUSLA/NEWB guidelines will be followed (see steps 1-6 below):

- Subsequent to the above suspension procedures and meetings with parents/guardians, if serious/gross incidents of misbehaviour continue, the pupil may be recommended for expulsion by the Board of Management. The decision to expel will not be taken lightly and will be dependent on the child's history of gross misbehaviour in the school.
- Step 1 – A detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the Principal
- Step 2 – A recommendation to the Board of Management
- Step 3 – Consideration by the Board of Management of the Principal's recommendation; and the holding of a hearing. The parents/guardians of the child will be allowed to make a submission to the Board of Management at the hearing.
- Step 4 – Board of Management deliberations and actions following the hearing
- Step 5 – Consultations arranged by the Educational Welfare Officer
- Step 6 – Confirmation of the decision to expel. Parents will be advised of the right to appeal this expulsion.
- A record will be kept in the school of all instances of serious misbehaviour by pupils.
- Breaches of behaviour will be recorded in writing by the class teacher and if necessary by the Principal
- Other relevant school policies (eg. Health & Safety) may be referred to.
- The school's Anti Bullying Policy.
- In exceptional circumstances, pupils may be expelled for a first offence. Automatic expulsion may apply in the event that a student is involved in:
 - A pre-meditated serious injury to another child / adult
 - Dealing illegal drugs

18. PUPILS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Pupils with special needs will be required to follow the school's 'Code of Behaviour' but teachers will use their professional judgment in relation to regularity and level of sanctions. While teachers must be seen to be fair in the eyes of other children who may have exhibited the same type of misdemeanours, they will also show leniency and understanding in relation to children with specific learning/behavioural difficulties. Parents of these children will be kept informed of their child's behaviour on a regular basis and may be requested to work with the school in devising effective strategies to help the child to improve her behaviour. This may involve devising an Individual

Education Plan or IEP and working and co-operating with a Special Needs Assistant (SNA), if an SNA is deployed to assist a pupil/class. The devising of such strategies may also entail contacting and meeting with relevant out of school agencies – such as the National

Educational Psychological Service (NEPS), HSE Community Psychology Services and the National Council for Special Education.

19. SUCCESS CRITERIA

Practical indicators of the success of the policy include:

- A happy and caring school environment
- Positive feedback from teachers, parents and pupils.
- Observation of good behaviour in class rooms, corridors and the yard.

20. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITY

The people who have particular responsibility for aspects of the policy are:

The Board of Management, the school's principal, class teachers, school staff, parents, guardians and pupils and those working within our school community. The overall responsibility for behaviour within the school rests with the Principal. However, the Board of Management has ultimate responsibility for behaviour under its management and a duty to ensure that a fair code of behaviour applies therein.

21. IMPLEMENTATION

This policy will apply from the start of the school year 2018.

Teachers will discuss the code with the pupils in the school and formally teach/revise the expectations for behaviour regularly so that pupils are aware of what is expected of them. Each teacher will ensure that their class develops classroom rules and that children agree to follow these. Parents will also be informed of the code by having a copy of the code sent home for their perusal.

TIMETABLE FOR REVIEW

This policy will be monitored and reviewed by the staff and the Board of management on an annual basis and when the need arises.

22. RATIFICATION & COMMUNICATION

The Board of Management officially ratified this policy in February, 2020.

The policy will be circulated to parents/guardians of applicants on enrolment for signature and acceptance and to those parents whose children are already enrolled in the school.

Signed: Sr Teresa McAllister (Chairperson of BoM)

Date: 26.02.20